



Laboratory Accreditation as a Component of the Help America Vote Act

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The Help America Vote Act Requires

- That NIST conduct an evaluation of independent, non-Federal laboratories not later than 6 months after the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) first adopts voting system guidelines
- That NIST submit a list of accredited laboratories to the EAC for recognition



How Will NIST Accredit Laboratories?

- **Through the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP), which is administered by NIST**
 - **A well-established laboratory accreditation program that is recognized both nationally and internationally**
 - **NVLAP accreditation criteria are codified in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR, Title 15, Part 285)**



Accreditation Criteria

- **NIST Handbook 150, *NVLAP Procedures and General Requirements***
- **ISO/IEC International Standard 17025, *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories***
- **The 2002 Voting System Standards**
- **Any other criteria deemed necessary by the Election Assistance Commission (EAC)**



NVLAP Laboratory Accreditation Procedures

- **Laboratory**
 - Submits application for accreditation
 - Undergoes on-site assessment
 - Responds to nonconformities
 - Conducts proficiency testing (if possible)

- **NVLAP**
 - reviews all assessment information
 - Makes accreditation decision
 - Makes public announcement of accreditation



Where NVLAP Fits in the Testing Picture

- Testing during design and development (vendor can use any laboratory)
- **Qualification Testing (use of NVLAP-accredited, EAC-designated laboratory required)**
- Certification Testing (State can use any laboratory)
- Acceptance Testing (purchasing election authority can use any laboratory)

All can benefit from the use of accredited testing laboratories



NIST Actions To Date

- **Issued a Federal Register Notice (June 23, 2004) announcing the establishment of an accreditation program for voting systems under National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) procedures**
- **Conducted a workshop on laboratory accreditation on August 17, 2004**
 - **Current NASED accreditation program**
 - **Voting System Standards (VSS)**
 - **The NVLAP program and procedures**
 - **Comments and questions**

(workshop documents are available from NVLAP)



Next Steps

- **NVLAP workshop for state election officials in early 2005**
 - The workshop will be interactive
 - Any interested party may attend
 - NVLAP would like your input
 - Needs of stakeholders
 - Defining the Scope of Accreditation,
 - Access to technical expertise
- **NVLAP will accept applications for accreditation beginning April 2005**



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